Tarifit Dictionary

Introduction: *There are several dialects of Tarifit, but the main dialect dealt with in the dictionary at this web site is that of the Ayt Waryagher. They are located in the Al Hoceima area of north-central Morocco (see map further below). There are also some words from the Tarifit dialects of the Ibeqquyen (also in the Al Hoceima area) and the Iqerayen (Nador). A few words are from other Tarifit dialects like the Ayt Tuzin (Midar) and Tamsaman. Unless the usage of a word is marked (by a dialect name), then one can assume it is from one or more of the clans of the Ayt Waryagher. Words can and do change from one clan to another. The main focus on vocabulary in the dictionary here is on those clans who live in and close to Al Hoceima.*

In Tamazight languages, feminine forms most often begin with a t/ṯ. The Ayt Waryagher, however, often change an initial ṯ (th) to a ḏ (dh). Many r's are also dropped in their dialect. Despite this linguistic characteristic of the Ayt Waryagher (and by other tribes), the underlying form of the word is written here. That is, the underlying ṯ's are retained as well as the r's. Speakers or students of the language can say the words as they like, but in a work of this nature, it is more practical to keep to a more phonemic spelling rather than a phonetic one.

Amazigh:Tarifit is an Amazigh (or Berber) language.

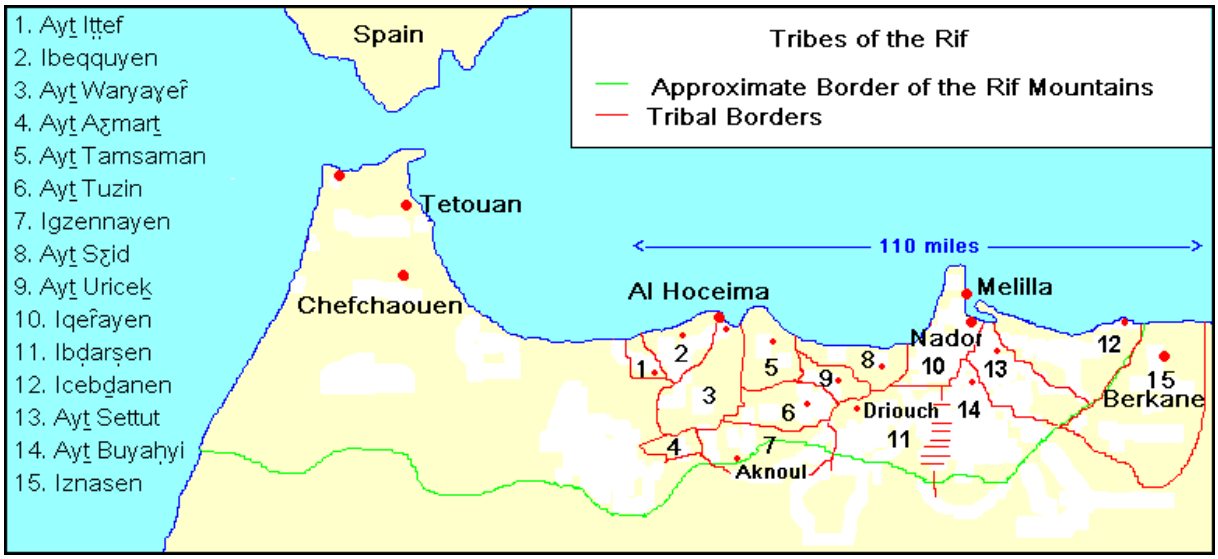
Tarifit is an Amazigh (or Berber) language. It belongs to the Berber branch of the Afro-Asiatic family of languages. It is one of many Amazigh languages in North Africa (see map to the right).

Tarifit: *Most speakers of Tarifit live in northern Morocco, but there are many who have emigrated to Europe. There are significant populations of Riffians in France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Spain. Some figures say there are over 400,000 in Europe and around 1,500,000 in Morocco. See the map to the right for the general area where Riffis live in Morocco. Other names for Tarifit in English are Shilha, Rif Tamazight, and Riffi. Tarifit is both the general name for the language of the Riffian people and the name of one of the main dialects of Riffi. In other words, one dialect of the Tarifit Language is called Tarifit. Other dialects of Tarifit, for example, are Taqrasht and Tabeqquyt. There are others as well.*

Although there are many dialects of Riffi, there are two predominant ones (in regard to population). One is called Tarifit and is most associated with the tribe of the Ayt Waryagher. They live in the general vicinity of the city of Al Hoceima. Al Hoceima could be considered the cultural heart of the Rif. The other main dialect of Riffi is Taqrasht and is associated with the tribe of the Iqerayen near Nador. Nador could be considered the economic center of the Rif. When speaking in general terms, people call their language Tarifit or Tamazight n Arrif. If one wanted to be more specific, a person from Nador, for example, would say he speaks Taqrasht and not Tarifit. He would probably see Taqrasht as a type of Tarifit, though. A member of the tribe of the Ibeqquyen would say he speaks Tabeqquyt. However, that person would also probably say that Tabeqquyt is a type of Tarifit.

Some of the information presented here is taken from David Montgomery Hart's landmark ethnography called The Aith Waryaghar of the Moroccan Rif (1976). This book is the main anthropological work done on the Rif. Although it concentrates on the tribe of the Ayt Waryagher, it does discuss in some detail the other Riffian tribes in the area. Extensive linguistic work was done on Tarifit by the Catholic priest Rev. Pedro Sarrionandia at the turn of the century and by Rev. Esteban Ibáñez in the 1940's. Ibáñez's main work on Tarifit is called Diccionario Español-Rifeño (1944). Some good information can also be found in Carlton Coon's 1931 book Tribes of the Rif and in a few other books named at the bottom of this page. See the map below to help understand the dialectical situation of the Rif. This map is mainly based on Sarrionandia and Ibáñez's work.

Linguistically, Sarrionandia and Ibáñez divide the Riffian dialects into three groups: western, central, and eastern. The western dialects are numbers 1-4. The central dialects are 5-10, and the eastern dialects are 11-15. This division is based on linguistic similarities among the members of these three groups. Hart puts the Tarifit-speaking tribes into four dialectical groups: 1) northern and southwestern Ayt Waryagher, Ibeqquyen, Ayt Amart, and Ayt Ittef; 2) southeastern Ayt Waryagher (i.e., Ayt Bu Ayyash and the Jbel Hmam area); 3) Igzennayen and the Ayt Tuzin; 4) Tamsaman and the eastern tribes. The Ayt Settut are not mentioned by Sarrionandia and Ibañez. They are an Arab tribe, but many of them now speak Tarifit. They are in the area around the town of Zayo.



Geographically, Hart divides the Tarifit-speaking tribes into two main groups: central and eastern. The central Riffian tribes inhabit the country to the west, south, and east of the port city of Al Hoceima: Ayt Waryagher, Ibeqquyen, Ayt Ittef, Ayt Amart, Igzennayen, Ayt Tuzin, and the Tamsaman. The land they inhabit is mostly rocky and mountainous. There are several eastern Riffian tribes and they inhabit the land from Midar to Melilla: Tafarsit (part of the Ayt Tuzin), Ayt Urishek (Ben Taib area), Ayt Said (Dar Kebdani area), Ibdarsen (Drioush area), Ayt Buyahyi (Aaroui area), Ishebdanen (Kebdana area), and the Iqerayen (Nador area). These tribes inhabit flat, open, and rolling country.
The Ayt Waryagher can be divided into five main sub-tribes: Ayt Yusef u-Ali/Ayt Ali, Ayt Buayyash, Imrabeden, Ayt Abdallah, and Ayt Hadifa. These sub-tribes can be divided even further into many clans. See http://www.amazigh.nl/geografie/aithwayagher/ for a good description and map of these divisions (or see Hart, pp. 250-252).

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Abbreviations

Table of English Abbreviations

Eng	English	Español	العربية
adj	adjective	adjetivo	صِفَة
adv	adverb	adverbio	ظَرْف
ANAT	anatomy	anatomía	تشريح
AS	Ayt Sider	ayt sider	بني سيدل
AT	Ayt Tuzin	ayt tuzin	بني توزين
aux	auxiliary verb	verbo auxiliar	فَعَل مُسَاعِد
AW	Ayt Waryagher	ayt waryagher	بني وریاغل
BOT	Botany	botánica	نبات
BQ	Ibeqquyen	beqquyen	بقوية
col	collective	colectivo/a	صِيغَة الجَمْع
conj	conjunction	conjunción	حَرْف عَطْف
const	construct/bound form of a noun	estado de anexión de un sustantivo	صِيغَة الإسْم الإعْرَابي
dem	demonstrative	demostrativo/a	صِفَة الإشَارَة
dir	dirrectional	dirreccional	إبْتِعَاد
etc	etcetera	etcétera	الخ، إلى آخِره
fem	feminine	femenino	المُؤَنَّث
fig	figurative	figurativo	مَجَازِيّ
free	free state of a noun	estado libre de un sustantivo	صِيغَة الإسْم غير إعْرَاب
idiom	expression	modismo	تعبير
interj	interjection	interjección	صِيغَة التعجُّب
interr	interrogative	interrogativo/a	ضَمِير الإسْتِفْهَام
IZ	Ayt Iznasen	ayt iznasen	بني سناسن
lit	literally	literalmente	حَرْفِيًّا
masc	masculine	masculino	مُذَكَّر
n	noun	sustantivo	إسْم
ORN	ornithology	ornitología	طيور: علم الطيور
pl	plural	plural	جَمْع
prep	preposition	preposición	حَرْف الجَرّ
pron	pronoun	pronombre	ضَمِير

Eng	English	Español	العربية
QR	Iqerayen	Guelaya	قلعية
rel	relative	relativo/a	إسْم المَوصُول
sg	singular	singular	مُفْرَد
sl	slang	argot	رَطانَة عَامِّيَة
v	verb	verbo	فِعْل
vi	intransitive verb	verbo intransitivo	فِعْل مُتَعَدٍّ
vt	transitive verb	verbo transitivo	فِعْل غير مُتَعَدٍّ

Esp	Español	English	العربية
adj	adjetivo	adjective	صِفَة
adv	adverbio	adverb	ظَرْف
ANAT	anatomía	anatomy	تشريح
AS	ayt sider	Ayt Sider	بني سيدل
AT	ayt tuzin	Ayt Tuzin	بني توزين
anex	estado de anexión de un sustantivo	bound form of a noun	صِيغَة الإسْم الإعْرَابي
AW	ayt waryagher	Ayt Waryagher	بني وریاغل
arg	argot	slang	رَطانَة عَامِّيَة
aux	verbo auxiliar	auxiliary verb	فَعَل مُسَاعِد
BOT	botánica	botany/a	نبات
BQ	ibeqquyen	Ibeqquyen	بقوية
col	colectivo/a	collective	صِيغَة الجَمْع
conj	conjunción	conjunction	حَرْف عَطْف
dem	demostrativo/a	demonstrative	صِفَة الإشَارَة
dir	dirreccional	dirrectional	حَرْف إقْتِرَاب،
etc	etcétera	etcetera	الخ، إلى آخره
fem	femenino	feminine	المُؤَنَّث
fig	figurativo	figurative	مَجَازِيّ
mod	modismo	expression	تعبير
interj	interjección	interjection	صيغَة التعجُّب
interr	interrogativo/a	interrogative	ضَمِير الإسْتِفْهَام
IZ	ayt iznasen	Ayt Iznasen	بني سناسن
libre	estado libre de un sustantivo	free state of a noun	صيغَة الإسْم غير إعْرَاب

Esp	Español	English	العربية
lit	literalmente	literally	حَرْفِيًّا
masc	masculino	masculine	مُذَكَّر
ORN	ornitología	ornithology	طيور: علم الطيور
pl	plural	plural	جَمْع
prep	preposición	preposition	حَرْف الجَرّ
pron	pronombre	pronoun	ضَمِير
QR	Guelaya	Iqerayen	قلعية
rel	relativo/a	relative	إسْم المَوصُول
s	sustantivo	noun	إسْم
sg	singular	singular	مُفْرَد
v	verbo	verb	فِعْل
vi	verbo intransitivo	intransitive verb	فِعْل مُتَعَدٍّ
vt	verbo transitivo	transitive verb	فِعْل غير مُتَعَدٍّ

Español	English	العربية
sustantivo	noun	إسْم
relativo/a	relative	إسْم المَوصُول
ibeqquyen	Ibeqquyen	بقوية
ayt tuzin	Ayt Tuzin	بني توزين
ayt iznasen	Ayt Iznasen	بني سناسن
ayt sider	Ayt Sider	بني سيدل
ayt waryagher	Ayt Waryagher	بني وریاغل
anatomía	anatomy	تشريح
modismo	expression	تعبير
plural	plural	جَمْع
dirreccional	directional	حَرْف إقْتِرَاب،
preposición	preposition	حَرْف الجَرّ
conjunción	conjunction	حَرْف عَطْف
literalmente	literally	حَرْفِيًّا
etcétera	etcetera	الخ، إلى آخره
argot	slang	رَطانَة عَامِّيَة
adjetivo	adjective	صِفَة

Español	English	العربية
demostrativo/a	demonstrative	صِفَة الإشَارَة
estado de anexión de un sustantivo	bound form of a noun	صِيغَة الإسْم الإعْرَابي
estado libre de un sustantivo	free state of a noun	صِيغَة الإسْم غير إعْرَاب
estado libre de un sustantivo	free state of a noun	صِيغَة الإسْم غير إعْرَاب
interjección	interjection	صِيغَة التعجُّب
colectivo/a	collective	صِيغَة الجَمْع
pronombre	pronoun	ضَمِير
interrogativo/a	interrogative	ضَمِير الإسْتِفْهَام
ornitología	ornithology	طيور: علم الطيور
adverbio	adverb	ظَرْف
verbo	verb	فِعْل
verbo transitivo	transitive verb	فِعْل غير مُتَعَدٍّ
verbo intransitivo	intransitive verb	فِعْل مُتَعَدٍّ
verbo auxiliar	auxiliary verb	فَعَل مُسَاعِد
Guelaya	Iqerayen	قلعية
femenino	feminine	المُؤَنَّث
figurativo	figurative	مَجَازِيّ
masculino	masculine	مُذَكَّر
singular	singular	مُفْرَد
botánica	botany	نبات

Tarifit Grammar :

Here are a few tips about Tarifit grammar to help you the reader use this online dictionary. It is far from a comprehensive grammar of Tarifit. Only enough is given to help you better understand the entries in the dictionary.

Nouns: Nouns are either masculine or feminine. Masculine nouns usually begin with a, i, or u in the singular form. In the plural form, they also usually begin with a, i or u and usually end in -en, -yen, or -an. Feminine nouns usually begin with ta, ti or tu in the singular and end in t. In the plural, they also usually begin with ta, ti or tu and usually end with -in or -yin. There are irregular endings for both masculine and feminine nouns. In this dictionary, gender is often marked for the nouns which do not follow the patterns mentioned above. The majority of these exceptions are loan words.

Most nouns have a special form which is often called the construct or bound form. These are forms that are used in certain linguistic environments. In this dictionary, construct forms are usually listed.

They are in parentheses in the entry. If the entry is not yet complete, these forms may be missing. The construct form of the noun is used most often in the following environments: 1) when the subject comes after the verb, 2) when the noun follows a true preposition, and 3) when the noun follows the conjunction ḏ (dh). It may appear in a few other environments (like after bu-), but the above three are the main ones.

Verbs: There are only about thirty verbs so far in this dictionary. The citation form for most verbs is the 2nd person singular imperative (the "you" command form). Many verbs are still being worked on and will be added to the dictionary in good time and as they are ready. For the thirty or so verbs that are in the dictionary, there is a paradigm of the verb conjugations for each one. Before the paradigm in the verb entry, there are the minimum five forms which can be used to conjugate all the other forms (for those who have the knowledge to do that). These five forms are given in this order: the aorist (or unmarked form), the preterit (a completed action), the negative preterit, the intensive (a continuous or habitual action), and the negative intensive. These are all given in the "he/it" form (3rd person masculine singular). Berber languages do not have tense (past, present, future). They have what is called aspect (completed action, continuous action, etc.). That can be a little hard to grasp; so in a general way, you can look at the preterit as the "past tense" and the intensive/continuous as the "present tense." The "future tense" is usually formed with aḏ + aorist. There is a future continuous as well. That is formed using aḏ + continuous. There are also imperatives and participles. These are given in the full conjugation of the verb.

Adjectives: Adjectives are often similar in form to nouns except that they do not have construct forms. Many words can be used as both adjectives or nouns. A word in the dictionary with a part of speech indicated as *adj/n* is a word that can act as an adjective or a noun.

Stative verbs can appear to be adjectives, but they are really verbs and are conjugated like verbs. Stative verbs are not really preterit or continuous. The context of the utterance determines its meaning.

Numbers: Most numbers have come into Tarifit from Moroccan Colloquial Arabic. These are the numbers that people actually use in everyday speech; so those are the numbers listed in this dictionary. Some linguists have proposed "purer" numbers based on other Berber languages, but those numbers can only be found in some of the new books. They are not the numbers that most Riffis actually use themselves and neither would most Riffis understand them. This dictionary gives the words that Riffis actually use in everyday speech. There are few, if any, neologisms. The objective of this online dictionary is not to promote (or denegrade) neologisms; it is to document common words and phrases used by Riffis in Morocco. When a person uses a word or phrase from this dictionary, he or she can be sure that it is a term used somewhere in one of the dialects of Tarifit. It is not a made-up term.

Morphology: Morphology is the study of how words are formed in a language. The three main topics discussed here are inflection, derivation, and compounding. Inflection has to do with the process of forming variants of the same word (go -> goes, dog -> dogs). Derivation has to do with the process of how new words are derived from other ones (happy -> happiness, happy -> unhappy). And compounding has to do with the process of how two different words can be combined to form a new word (news+stand -> newsstand, news+paper -> newspaper).

Syntax: Syntax refers to the rules and patterns for constructing phrases, clauses, and sentences in a language. This kind of study shows us how the words of a language fit together naturally to form units of meaning.

- Word order in Tarifit is normally VSO (Verb Subject Object). It can often be SVO (Subject Verb Object) and it can have other orders as well. Varying from the normal VSO order can signify a change in the meaning of a sentence.

Accent: Accent is normally on the vowel of the penultimate syllable (second-to-the-last syllable). If the vowel of the penultimate syllable is a schwa (e), then the accent falls back to the vowel of the third to the last syllable. If the word only has two syllables, then the accent falls on whatever vowel is found in the penultimate syllable. This is a general rule to follow, but there are many exceptions. The accent on verbs with a geminate consonant (doubled consonant) are especially likely to have exceptions to this accent rule.